Hashirajima
HERE YOU ARE.

IT'S A SNACK FROM YOUR HOMELAND.

GO AHEAD AND EAT IT.

I MADE DORAYAKI TODAY.

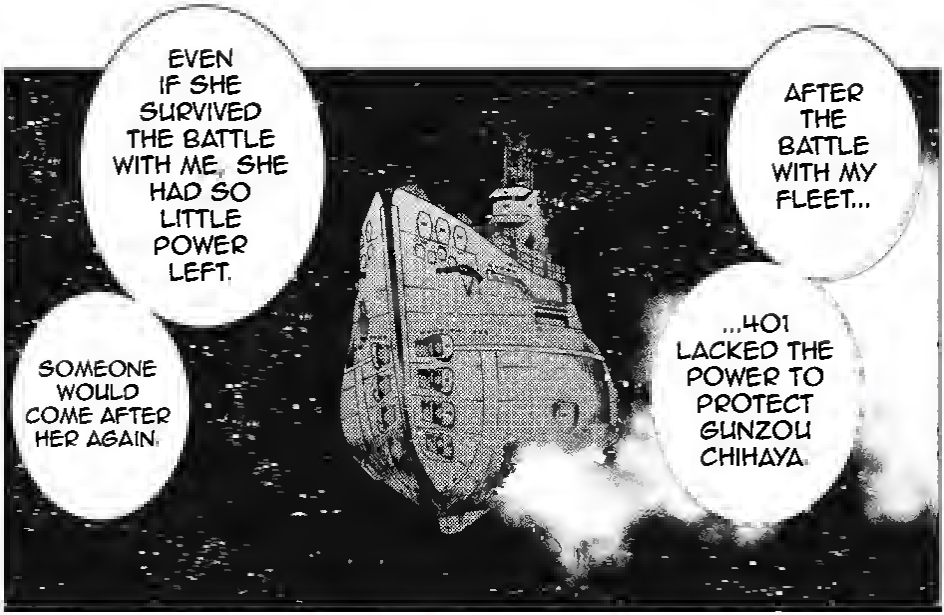
IT'S PROBABLY QUITE TASTY.
TRUE...
HIS CONSCIOUSNESS HASN'T AWOKEN, RIGHT?
MAY I...
...ASK SOMETHING?
THE TREATMENT SHOULD HAVE WORKED.

IN FACT...
...I'M GRATEFUL YOU'VE WAITED SO LONG TO DO SO.
I THINK I KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO ASK.
WHY DID YOU SAVE GUNZOU CHIHAYA?
ALL RIGHT THEN.
...I HEARD...
...A VOICE.

WHEN I REALIZED THAT DEFEAT AT THE END OF THE BATTLE WAS INEVITABLE...
...401 TOLD ME THAT I WAS ARROGANT.
AND AS I SIMPLY LAY THERE IN THE WATER...
...SOME-ONE BROKE MY EXTERNAL LINK FIRE-WALLS.
I DON'T KNOW WHO THEY WERE, BUT THEY SAID...
WHAT...
...DID THEY SAY?

THEY SAID...
CRUNCH
...TO "SAVE MY FUTURE."
SAVE...
SAVE...
...YOUR FUTURE.

BUT THE VOICE WAS SO CLEAR...
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THEY MEANT.
THAT'S RIGHT.
I DID THEM ALL IN THE SPAN OF A FEW SECONDS.
...AND CAUSE ME TO GENERATE VARIOUS SIMULATIONS.
...THAT IT WAS ENOUGH TO REBOOT MY CONSCIOUSNESS...
AND THAT'S WHY YOU DID THIS?
YES.
...FOR THE KEY TO THE FUTURE.
I SEARCHED...

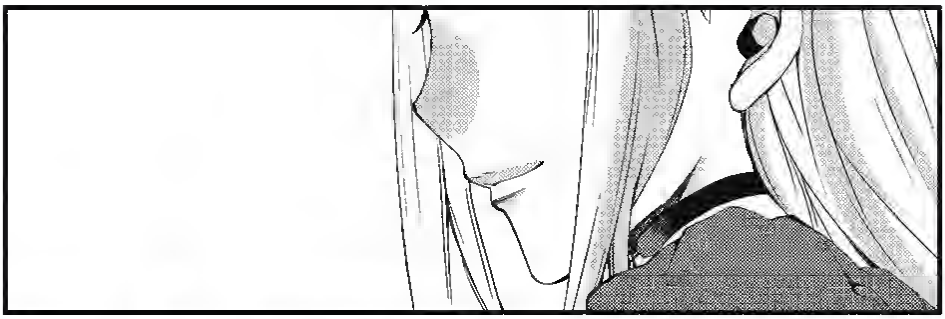

EVEN IF SHE SURVIVED THE BATTLE WITH ME, SHE HAD SO LITTLE POWER LEFT.
AFTER THE BATTLE WITH MY FLEET...
SOMEONE WOULD COME AFTER HER AGAIN.
...401 LACKED THE POWER TO PROTECT GUNZOU CHIHAYA.

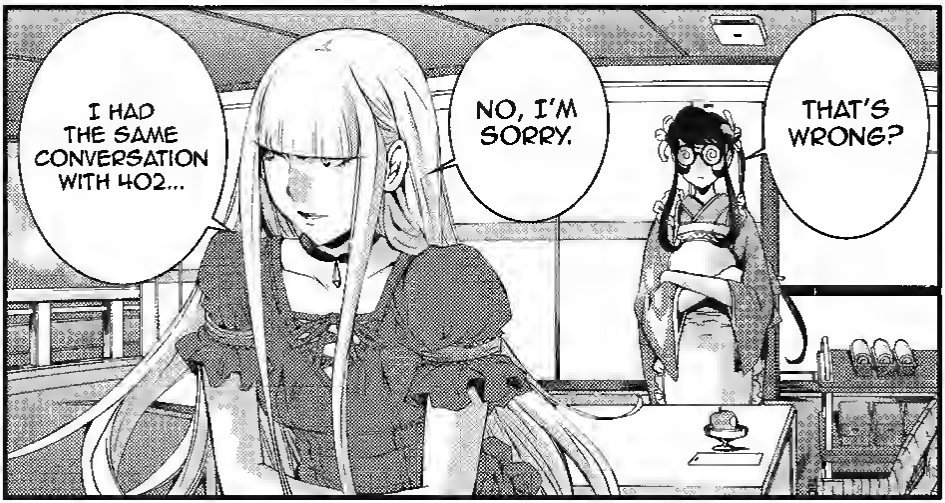
...AND DIE WITH GUNZOU CHIHAYA.
AS BADLY WOUNDED AS SHE WAS, SHE WOULD BE EASILY DEFEATED...

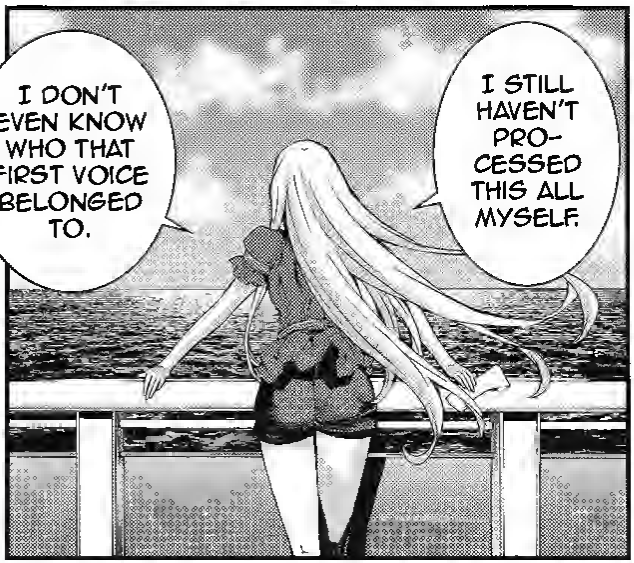
...THAT IF WE LOST GUNZOU CHIHAYA HERE, ONE KEY TO THE FUTURE WOULD BE LOST.
WHICH MEANT...
THAT WOULD MEAN THE END OF A PARTICULAR FUTURE I SAW AT THE CONCLUSION OF ONE OF MY SIMULATIONS.

AND SO I DECIDED THAT I NEEDED TO SPLIT UP GUNZOU AND 401.
WITHOUT GUNZOU CHIHAYA ON-BOARD...
...THE 401 WOULD BE LESS IM-PORTANT TO US.
KLAT
KLAT
THE CHANCE OF AN IMMEDIATE COUNTER-ATTACK WOULD BE REDUCED...
...AND GUNZOU CHIHAYA WOULD NO LONGER BE AT RISK OF DYING WITH THE 401.
THAT'S RIGHT. I WAS THE ONE...
...WHO HAD TO TAKE THE KEY TO THE FUTURE THERE.

WHAT DID YOU SEE...
...AT THE END OF YOUR SIMULATIONS, KONGOU?
ALL THE OTHER WAYS OF AVOIDING ITS DESTRUCTION...
...WERE FAR TOO IMPROBABLE.
KLAT
KLAT
...
I CAN'T TELL YOU NOW.
...
I SEE.
THAT'S A SHAME.




I HAD THE SAME CONVERSATION WITH 402...
NO, I'M SORRY.
THAT'S WRONG?

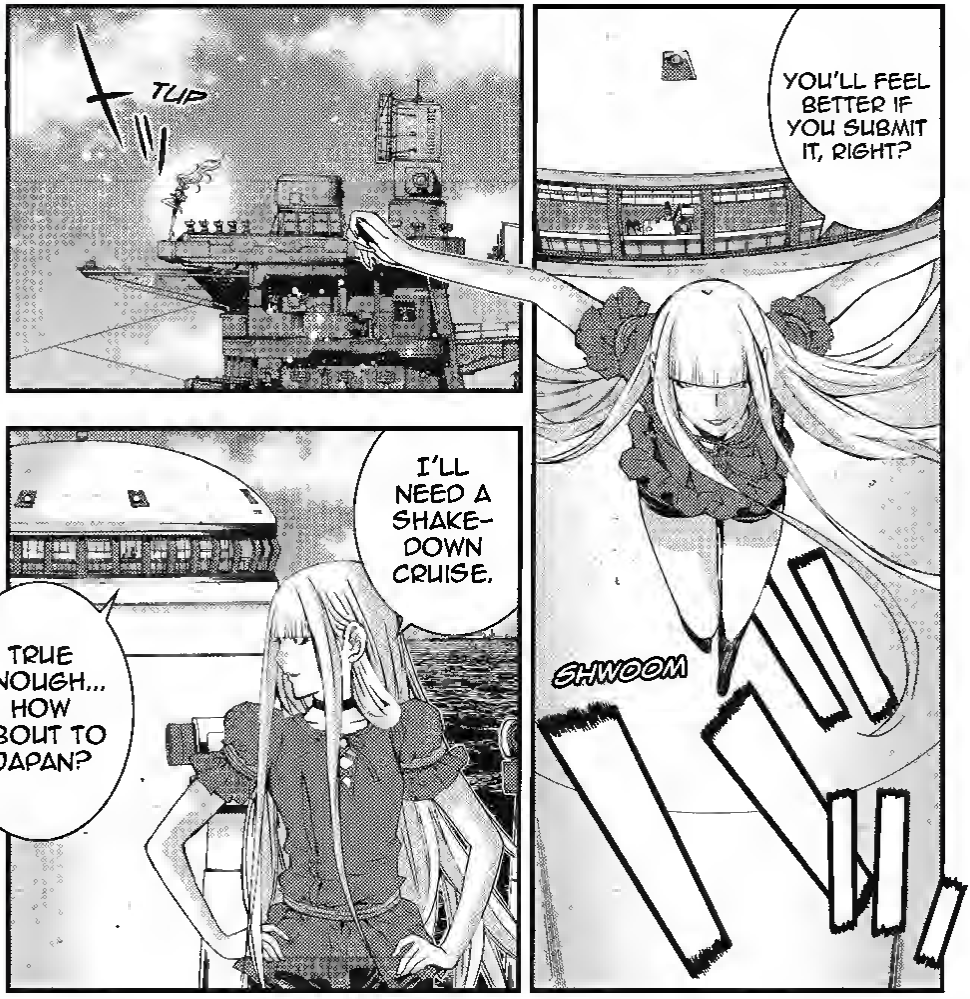

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO THAT FIRST VOICE BELONGED TO.
I STILL HAVEN'T PRO-CESSED THIS ALL MYSELF.

YES, OVER THE TACTICAL NETWORK.
WITH 402?

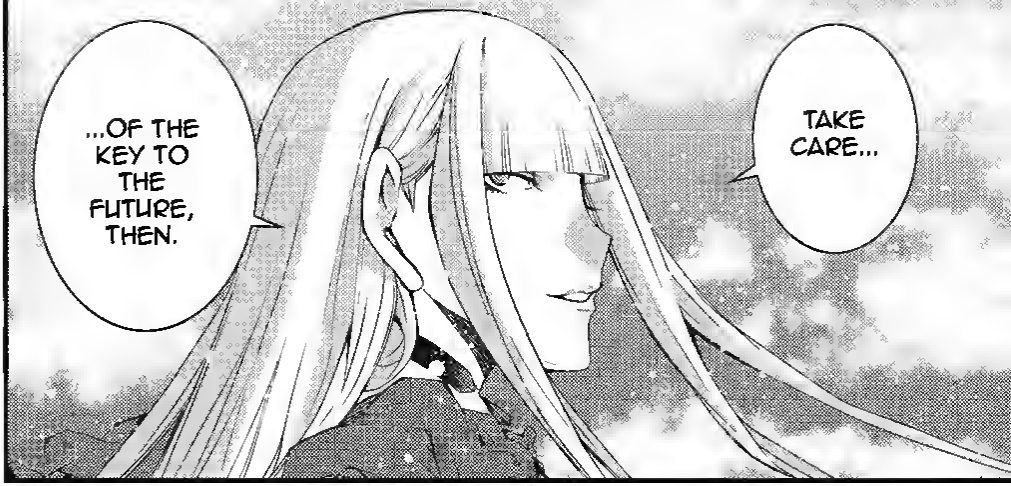
ACCORDING TO THE LOGS, MY FIREWALLS AROUND THE CORE WERE COMPLETELY SOLID.
WHO TALKED TO ME?
...
ZHREEE

ZHREE
THWOOM
CATCH
KONGOU, YOUR BODY HAS BEEN CON-STRUCTED.
GOOD WORK!

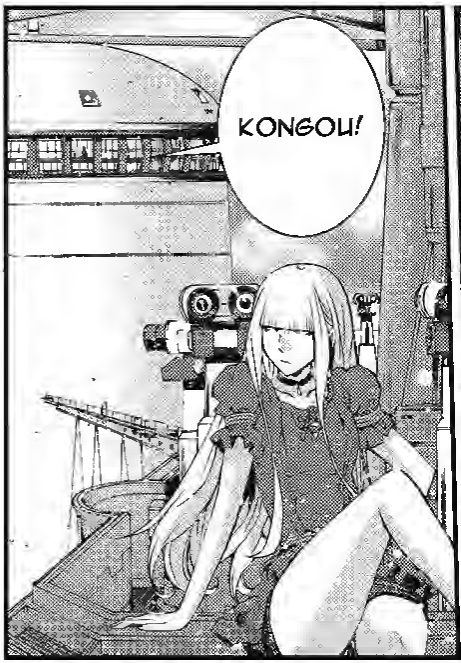
"KONGOU CLUB APPLICATION"

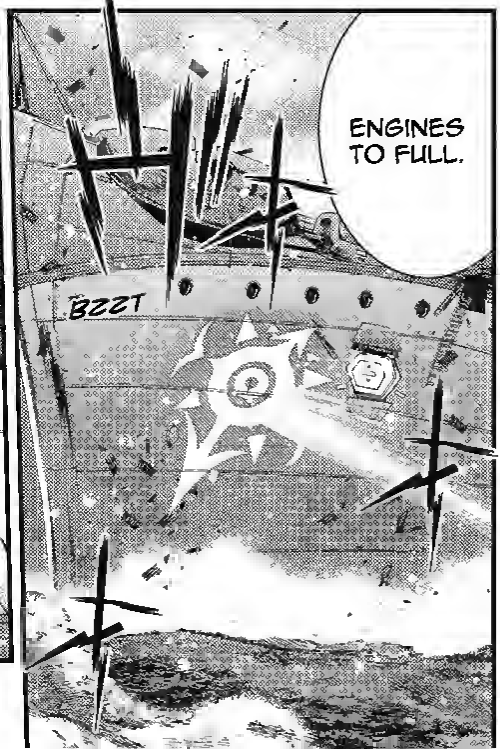


...AT GUNZOU'S ALMA MATER, REMEMBER?
402'S REPORT SAID THEY'RE HAVING A SCHOOL FESTIVAL...
TUNK
JAPAN?
HIS ALMA MATER, HUH?
YES...
PERHAPS I'LL GIVE IT A SHOT.
THAT MIGHT BE GOOD.
I ONLY EVER WENT PAST JAPAN, I NEVER MADE LANDFALL.

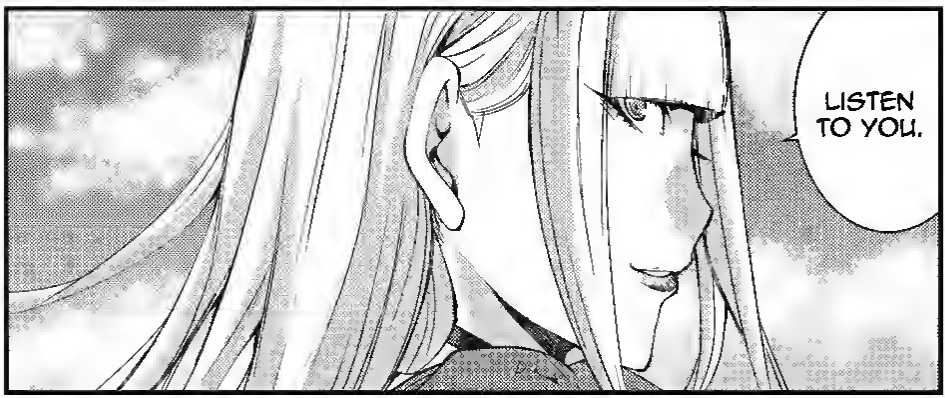

TAKE CARE...
...OF THE KEY TO THE FUTURE, THEN.

OF COURSE.
LEAVE IT TO ME FOR A LITTLE WHILE.


KONGOU!


ENGINES TO FULL.
BZZT

I ACCEPT YOUR APPLICATION...
...TO THE "SUNK SHIPS CLUB"


LISTEN TO YOU.

THWOOM
ドォ
ォ
ォ